



Case study: Lessons learned from Tanga

Start small, with only a few priority issues that stakeholders consider most important. Learn to be effective on one or a few matters before trying to deal with every important issues, or all aspects of a single issue. The villagers themselves should have a major role in selecting priority issues.

Start with listening. Who and where are the resource users (defined as those who are causing the problem, affected by it, or part of the solution), what are they doing, what do they want to achieve? This is fundamental to building effective partnerships.

Work to achieve an effective partnership with the community. They have important roles to play. For example, villagers can effectively carry out routine patrols and inspections of gear, when most resource users come from that community only. Management officers may be needed when more than just a few resource users come from outside a community.

Use participatory approaches throughout, including resource assessments, issue identification, priority actions, decision-making. Participatory approaches between the management authority and communities are an effective way of listening and building the partnerships discussed above. In this way, knowledge from resource users and managers is used to help identify issues and possible feasible actions.

Verify conclusions reached through participatory appraisals by feedback to resource users and independent observation and measurement. Both approaches are needed at the same time.

Use transparent processes and decision-making throughout and at every level of program activities, including routine administration as well as policy. This approach is fundamental to improving management and community institutions.

Test proposed actions on a small scale before turning them into policy or strategies over a wide area. This allows management a way to try new unproven techniques. If existing methods are obviously not working, new ways of dealing with the issues may be needed, since existing methods are obviously not working.

Monitor all actions to test if they are having the desired outcome, or unexpected outcomes on both the environment, species, and people's well-being. This is part of the process of testing proposed actions: monitoring to see what effect they are having. Regular monitoring may show up mistakes before too much time and effort is spent on pursuing an ineffective technique.

Develop a pyramid of actions, whereby local people can take most actions without assistance from government or outside experts or donors. There are fewer actions that require assistance, and fewer still that need to be done by outside experts. This approach will improve empowerment and local institutions. It also assumes that funding from local and central government for protected area management will be limited - a stark reality in most developing countries. While surveys are useful in identifying activities that local residents can pursue on their own, it will be even more challenging to secure the participation of these stakeholders in actually carrying them out.



Deal with both the environment and people's well-being. Especially, deal with those aspects of people's well-being affected by the state of the environment and its resources. This is an important policy imperative of government and donors. It addresses the fundamental motivation for people's use of coastal resources. Sustainable tourism, in particular, can be an excellent motivator, because it offers local residents a financial benefit (from the tourists) for conserving the environmental resources that draw tourists.

Strengthen capacity of the management authority and in the community. Working with only one or the other will not give satisfactory results.

Allow a realistic time frame to build trust between communities and MPA staff. This process may take a year or more.

Offer user or access rights to an appropriate part of the MPA in return for management responsibility. For example, local fisher people can be granted exclusive or free rights to a certain area, where outsiders are either not allowed at all or must pay for a permit. This is a strong incentive for community participation in protected area management.

In Tanga, these principles were developed on a small scale and then applied over a large geographical area. The process took place in three phases:

Phase 1 - Understanding issues and testing solutions in pilot villages (July 1994 to June 1997). MPA managers first listened to local residents, asking them their viewpoints and opinions, without assuming that the best solutions were already known. MPA managers and local residents then tested proposed actions for coral reef management, dynamite control, mangrove restoration, alternative livelihoods, zoning, etc., in pilot villages.

Phase 2 - Fine-tuning and adjusting the best processes identified in phase 1 (1997-2000).

Cost-sharing and financing options were investigated, and processes and actions were fine-tuned, applied to a wider range of villages. The visible and widely accepted benefits from the pilot villages of Phase 1 were used as examples to enable wider use in Phase 2.

Phase 3 - Adopting the final processes as standard mainstream practice throughout a large region. (2000-ongoing) Lessons learned and successful applications were spread widely to all villages; networks of community-based protected areas were established, institutions and government policy frameworks were changed. The program is now self-sustaining.

Excerpted and modified from:

Salm, Rodney V., John R. Clark, and Erkki Siirila. 2000. *Marine and Coastal Protected Areas: A Guide for Planners and Managers*. Third edition. IUCN, Gland, Switzerland.